

baters who are always the same and fond of displaying their ability.

Not a few among them are real actors, who would honor the stages of the best theaters in the civilized world. Their poses, mimicry, jokes, verve, double meaning suggestions, affected sounds, and their knack of keeping the people amused, whet the curiosity and provide a real relaxation. Nearly the whole community huddles around them, even the old lamas who are used to sitting sleepily at these compulsory, boring meetings, for whom the novelty has worn off many, many years ago, and who have never been interested in the subject itself, strain their ears and huddle a little nearer to the stage and relax happily.

The Yellow Sect has always been fond of dialectic. The T'u-kuan Hutukhtu of Erh-ku-lung was celebrated for his logic in the learned world of Tibet, Mongolia, and Huang-chung.¹¹ The dialectic methods of Nagarjuna are particularly enjoyed by the philosophers. He used to "prove," in the most incredible ways, the non-existence of the world, of his proper self, and even of Buddhism.¹² The debaters try by means of recitation of endless memorized texts to stagger their opponents, and by tortuous questions to entice them into snares of sophism and to prove the most unbelievable theses. The attractive public disputations help to break the monotony of the monastic life, and to provide a couple of hours of relaxation.

It was said that once in a while some students passed official examinations and obtained titles and degrees, but I never had the opportunity to be present at such ceremonies.

Both these reasons explain the unusual attraction toward the College of Philosophy of the large number of lamas, who even lack the education of a student of an elementary school, and also the stubborn perseverance of the old lamas in continuing as members of the college.

The conditions for becoming a member of the other colleges and the method of study are identical with those of the College of Philosophy. The lamas have to attend only one compulsory service in the early morning in the main temple, as required by the organization of the community of the lamas, and have plenty of time to attend the exercises prescribed by other colleges in the morning and afternoon; they even have plenty of time to indulge in domestic duties and commerce. It would be instructive to make a comparison between the standard of the studies in Huang-chung and that of the celebrated lamaseries of Tibet, as described in nearly all the works concerned with the subject.¹³ After investigating the situation in Huang-chung, I harbor suspicions concerning the punctilious observance of the pro-

¹¹ Huth, *op. cit.*, 281.

¹² René Grousset, *Philosophies indiennes*, ch. 9, *passim*, Paris, Desclée de Brouwer, 1931.

¹³ Waddell, *op. cit.*, 184-188; Filchner, *op. cit.*, 350-358; Tucci, *op. cit.* 1: 94, etc.